

SAMPLE BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAM STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION

Program assessment should be a continual process within educational institutions. Assessment of individual programs is an integral part of a school district's plan to evaluate the overall effectiveness and/or efficiency of the district's programs and services. The assessment process provides information vital to determining the extent to which the district's goals and objectives are being met.

The program standards in this document correlate to the standards adopted for the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP). This document can be used to help meet the requirement of MSIP Standard 7.3 that requires an accountability system to assess student progress and program effectiveness for vocational programs. It also contributes to MSIP Standard 8.1 which requires a written, district wide procedural plan which coordinates the evaluation of the overall effectiveness and/or efficiency of the district's programs and services. The assessment of business programs should be an integral part of the school district's MSIP review and development of the district's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan.

This evaluation document can also be used to meet the requirements of federal legislation supporting vocational education and the Missouri State Plan for Vocational Education.

This evaluation document is designed to guide teachers, administrators, program advisory committee members, or other individuals/groups in assessing Business Education programs. Although the objective of any evaluation process is improvement, some specific uses of this program evaluation model could include:

1. An annual program evaluation involving identification of strengths and areas needing improvement, resulting in short- and long-term plans for program improvement.
2. Documentation of program effectiveness for receipt of federal funds.
3. Preparation of an annual report of the program to the Board of Education.
4. A program review in preparation for a Missouri School Improvement Review.
5. Guidance in the development of the program, courses and needed program revisions.
6. Orientation of administrators to the expectations of a quality Business Education program.
7. A guide for teachers new to the program area.
8. Professional development for teachers.

BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAM STANDARDS

RESOURCE STANDARDS

1. A The program offers a coherent sequence of courses leading to occupational competence.	___ Met ___ Not Met
	Yes No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program offers at least 3 courses. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program offers at least 3 units of credit. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
1. B The teacher has a valid renewable teaching certificate for the program area.	___ Met ___ Not Met
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district has on file a current teaching certificate for the teacher for the program area. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher maintains a file containing documentation of completion of the requirements for renewal of the teaching certificate. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
1. C Course offerings are appropriate for meeting the needs of students and employers.	___ Met ___ Not Met
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course offerings are based on enrollment trends, student interest surveys, and employment needs. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
1. D Class size is appropriate for the program area.	___ Met ___ Not Met
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class size does not exceed 28. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of students enrolled in the supervised business experience component does not exceed 15 for each period of teacher supervision time. 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments on Resource Standards:	Number of Standards Met: _____

PROCESS STANDARDS

2. Curriculum

2. A The program has a written curriculum and services to meet the needs of students. The curriculum is congruent with the overall philosophy of the program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
	Yes No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The written curriculum is formally adopted by the board <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> • The written curriculum guide includes the following components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> °rationale which relates the program goals to the district's mission and philosophy <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> °a general description of the content of the program <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> °general goals for graduates in the program area <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> °cross references to the knowledge (content), skills and competencies (process) students need to meet the goals established by the district and the Show Me Standards <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> • Curriculum and instructional strategies have been developed which integrate academic and vocational competencies. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 	
2. B The curriculum has been developed with appropriate input and is reviewed on an annual basis.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The curriculum guide is utilized by staff planning the instructional program and in the delivery of educational services. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> • Systematic procedures are in place to evaluate and revise the curriculum regularly based on actual student needs and indications of student mastery. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> • The curriculum is articulated through grade levels and common subject areas to ensure continuity of learning.. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> • The curriculum is reviewed annually and revised as necessary to reflect changes occurring in industry, student needs, and instructional technology. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> • Resources in the community are used to enrich the curriculum. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 	
2. C Learner outcomes and competencies for each course are clearly stated.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The curriculum for each course/program has identified competencies organized as units of instruction, with appropriate assessment methods and resources. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 	
Comments on Curriculum Standards:	Number of Standards
	Met: _____

3. Instruction

3. A Classroom instruction is congruent with the written curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Daily lesson plans derived from the curriculum guide are used to direct the educational process. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher is instructed in the use of non-biased practices and language which has been reinforced by policies, procedures and/or on-going awareness training to recognize racial, cultural, gender, or disability bias in curriculum and instructional practices. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. B Students have the opportunity to participate in Supervised Business Experience.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met	<input type="checkbox"/> NA
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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Students are enrolled in both the class and the supervised employment simultaneously. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Training stations are appropriate for the occupational area of the program. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • There is a written Instructional Management Plan between the school and the training sponsor on file for each student. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • There is a written training agreement between the school and the training sponsor on file for each student. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher provides both in class instruction and supervision. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher has extended employment based on the number of students participating in the supervised business experience component. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher has adequate supervision time in his/her schedule based on the number of students participating in the supervised business experience component. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Evaluation of students on the job includes occupationally specific skills as well as general workplace readiness. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher provides frequent supervision at the training station. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher closely screens and approves training stations. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • There is evidence that the supervised business experience component of the program has the support of the counselors, administrators and business community. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. C The program provides students with assistance in the transition to the workplace and/or continued education.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Worksite educational opportunities (job shadowing, experiential education, internships, etc.) are available. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|

- Articulation agreements have been implemented with postsecondary institutions and/or with other community resources, where applicable. ☐ ☐

3. D Sufficient breadth and depth of instruction is provided in the classroom to meet the needs of all learners.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Varied instructional strategies are used to address all learning styles. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Coordination procedures have been developed to insure appropriate instruction, review, and reinforcement for individual students served by special/support programs. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Students are provided appropriate support services (including supplementary aids and accommodations, when needed) to enter and succeed in the vocational education program. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher is knowledgeable about special/support programs offered by the district, and actively participates in the Individual Education Plan/Vocational Education Plan process. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. E The teacher monitors student progress toward course objectives and learner outcomes.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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- Program and/or course objectives, assessment methods and performance expectations are shared with students and parents/guardians prior to instruction. ☐ ☐
- An instructional management system exists for reporting student and class mastery of curriculum competencies. ☐ ☐

3. F The teacher and students have access to resources to effectively implement the curriculum of the program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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- Resources in the community are utilized to enrich the curriculum. ☐ ☐
- Procedures are in place for the periodic updating and replacement of instructional materials. ☐ ☐

3. G Equipment for the program supports the curriculum and instructional process.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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- Appropriate instructional technology is available for students and staff. ☐ ☐
- Equipment is in good repair and proper working order. ☐ ☐
- There are procedures for reporting and requesting repairs, and repairs are made promptly. ☐ ☐

Comments on Instruction Standards:	Number of Standards
	Met: _____

4. Career and Technical Student Organization

4. A Students are provided an opportunity to participate in FBLA as part of the program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • FBLA is an integral part of the program operation. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • FBLA is under the supervision of the program teacher. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The administration provides recognition and support for FBLA. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Resources are provided for the students and the teacher to participate in FBLA activities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. B There is a program of activities developed for the year which includes school and community service projects, leadership development activities, and the competitive events program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • A program of activities is developed annually by students and the teacher and is based upon the goals, objectives, and curriculum of the program. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The program of activities includes a series of activities scheduled throughout the school year. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The FBLA program of activities directly supports achievement of curriculum competencies. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Comments on Career and Technical Student Organization Standards:	Number of Standards
	Met: _____

5. Instructional Climate

5. A The instructional climate for the program is conducive to learning and emphasizes the capabilities of each student and the worth of all students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • The teacher holds high expectations for teaching and student learning. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Attendance by students and staff is high. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher accepts the responsibility of reducing student failure and promoting student success. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Each student is given the opportunity to succeed in school. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Student work is displayed in the classroom and the building. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The classroom is orderly; standards of conduct are understood by everyone and enforced consistently. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Classroom organization provides for optimum use of instructional time, equipment, and resources. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Comments on Instructional Climate Standards:	Number of Standards
	Met: _____

6. Guidance

6. A The program has sequential activities designed to assist students with making career and educational choices.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Educational/vocational information resources are readily available to students. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The counseling staff provides classroom instruction on career development topics. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

6. B A recruitment plan is implemented for the program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Recruitment efforts are focused on the needs, interests, and career objectives of the students in response to the needs of the business community. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The recruitment plan seeks to enroll students representative of the total school population. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

6. C The admissions policy for the program adheres to the philosophy and goals of the school.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Students enrolled in the program have an interest in the career area and the ability to benefit from the program. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher obtains assistance from the guidance staff and others within the school for recruiting and selecting students. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • All students have equal access to the program and its activities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Program enrollment is representative of the total school population with respect to race, gender, and disability. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Comments on Guidance Standards:	Number of Standards
	Met: _____

7. Professional Development

7. A Professional growth is a continuous process of refining skills and keeping current with new developments in the fields of education and business.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • The teacher prepares and follows an annual plan for professional growth and development. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher participates in technical and professional activities to update knowledge and skills. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Time is provided to staff as an encouragement to participate in staff development activities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher has been trained, within the last three years, in recognizing the signs and symptoms of substance abuse and has been trained in implementing the district's intervention strategies. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher is encouraged to maintain membership in and participate in professional organizations. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Comments on Professional Development Standards:	Number of Standards
	Met: _____

8. Program Administration

8. A The program has a written statement of educational mission and overall goals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • The statement of mission and goals includes the purpose and goals established for the program area. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Provisions are made for the periodic review and appropriate modification of the program goals to reflect current conditions with input from students, parents, and community representatives. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The mission and goals reflect the needs of all students, the labor market and the community. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8. B There is a written plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Measurable objectives identified for each vocational education program. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Established performance measures for each measurable objective. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • An acceptable level of performance has been determined for each measure. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • An established procedure for gathering, analyzing, and reporting data relevant to each measure of performance. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • An established procedure for reporting the outcomes and corrective action (if necessary) for all measurable objectives for each vocational program. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8. C There is a written set of policies and procedures which guide operations of the program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Written policies are in place for the program, and shared with students and parents. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • There is provision for periodic review of the policies by the teacher, administrators, and students. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The program is in compliance with policies and standards established by state and federal education agencies. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8. D There are procedures in place to ensure efficient financial management and accountability.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • The teacher provides input for determining the program budget. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • An accounting system is in place to provide for the complete and systematic recording of all funds received and expended, and appropriate school accounts are utilized. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • An inventory of equipment purchased with state and/or federal funds is maintained for the program. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8. E An advisory committee provides community input and support for the program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • An advisory committee has been established and is active. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The advisory committee has a written program of activities and a record of all meetings. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The advisory committee membership is appropriate for the program area. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8. F The teacher systematically and frequently provides information to various groups about the activities of the program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • A written plan provides guidance for providing information to various groups. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher maintains open communications with local media and school district public information staff. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • The teacher participates in local community organizations and activities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Comments on Program Administration Standards:	Number of Standards
	Met: _____

9. Facilities

9. A Facilities are healthful, adequate in size, clean, well-maintained and appropriate to house the program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
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- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • The program is housed in appropriate facilities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Adequate maintenance services are provided to maintain all educational facilities in a clean, safe and orderly state. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • All observed safety and emergency devices are in place and operational. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Staff members and students are trained in the safe and proper use of all safety and emergency devices where applicable. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Comments on Facilities Standards:	Number of Standards
	Met: _____

STRENGTHS: Summarize below the major strengths of the program, citing the related standard.

CONCERNS: Summarize below major concerns for the program, citing the related standard.

GENERAL COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT:

Guide to Developing a Written Evaluation Plan for Business Education Programs

The purpose of this *Guide* is to provide an outline of the components necessary in a written evaluation plan. Evaluation of business education programs provides a basis for identifying the strengths and concerns for the various programs and the overall business education curriculum. This then leads to the development of objectives and action plans resulting in program improvement. While this *Guide* provides an outline for a written evaluation plan, it is not intended to provide information on how to design and conduct program evaluations.

A plan for the evaluation of business education programs should include the following components:

1. The specific goals of the evaluation process.

While program improvement is always the goal of the evaluation process, a more specific goal should be set based on the type of evaluation conducted. The goal of the evaluation could be either (A) a general analysis of the business education program performance measures and standards or (B) a goal with a more specific focus on objectives and action plans previously established through the evaluation process.

A. Conducting a General Analysis

A general analysis of business education programs will provide a baseline of information from which critical issues or areas for improvement can be identified. This general analysis should use program specific standards or checklists and established performance measures for the program as a basis for the evaluation process. A general analysis of programs should be conducted at least every five years or when major changes to a program have occurred.

B. Conducting an Evaluation Based on Specific Objectives

A more specific goal for program evaluation would be to determine the achievement of an objective and the effectiveness of action plans developed as a result of a previous program evaluation. This type of goal is appropriate with annual evaluations of program improvement objectives. The basis for this type of evaluation is the business education improvement plan. The measurable objectives and evaluation procedures established for the improvement plan serve as the goals and procedures for the evaluation. This information can be found on the business education program improvement plan form, a sample of which is included. Performance standards for business education should also be part of the annual evaluation process.

2. A description of the evaluation process.

The description will include the procedure for gathering, analyzing and reporting data generated through the evaluation process. Included in this section should be:

- A description of the specific program components, goals, performance measures, or improvement objectives to be evaluated
- Timelines for gathering and reporting data
- Assignment of responsibilities for the evaluation process
- Dissemination plan for the evaluation report

3. A list of data sources which will be used in the evaluation process.

Data sources which address the evaluation goals must be identified as part of the evaluation plan. These data sources could include (among others) :

- Missouri School Improvement Program reports
- Program specific standards and checklists
- The district's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan
- The district's public report data
- Performance measures for business education programs
- Follow-up data on students enrolled in vocational programs
- Labor market and community needs assessments
- Student interest surveys
- Surveys of employers of graduates of business education programs
- Advisory committee review of programs and recommendations
- Student satisfaction surveys
- Information from administrative/board reviews or evaluation

4. A description of the process for program improvement

This section should include how the information included in the evaluation report will be used in planning for program improvement. Improvement plans must be tied to program standards, business education performance indicators, and/or standards for the Missouri School Improvement Program. Improvement plans should include measurable objectives and action plans which address the program improvement issues. The attached Business Program Improvement Plan form could be used to develop the plans.

Information for this section could include:

- How objectives for improvement will be prioritized and selected
- How the action plans to accomplish the objectives will be determined
- The relationship of the business education program evaluation process to the building or district level Comprehensive School Improvement Plan
- How the implementation of the objectives and action plans will be monitored

BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Objective # _____

Measurable objective: _____

How objective will be measured: _____

Standard/ Indicator	Action to be taken	Needed Resources	Person Responsible	Start Date	Complete Date

SAMPLE EVALUATION PLAN
General Analysis - 5 year

Business Education Evaluation Plan
Mytown High School

Goal: To identify needed improvements to the Business Education program.

Description of evaluation process: The evaluation will be conducted by the business education teacher(s) with help from the program advisory committee. Data will be gathered related to the program standards and performance standards established for business education. Once data have been gathered, a report will be written which describes the program's standing against these standards and performance measures. The report will be shared with advisory committee members, the principal and other administrators, guidance counselors and other teachers. A timeline for conducting the evaluation is included below.

Evaluation Timeline

	Start	Complete
Review previous MSIP self study and report	Oct. 1	Oct. 15
Complete program standards profile checklist	Oct. 15	Oct. 20
Complete MSIP Performance standards chart for vocational education	Oct. 20	Nov. 10
Prepare written report on program and performance standards	Nov.10	Jan. 15
Distribute written report to administrator and advisory committee	Jan. 15	Jan. 20
Prepare advisory committee recommendations	Jan. 20	Jan. 30
Prepare improvement plan based on recommendations	Jan. 30	Feb. 15
Present recommendations and improvement plan to administration/board	Feb. 15	Mar. 1
Implement improvement plan and design evaluation process	Mar. 1	Jun. 30

List of Data Sources:

DESE Report to the District, MSIP 200?
Vocational Program Standards, DESE
Mytown District Annual Performance Report, 200? and 200? (last 2 years)
Program enrollment and placement data from teacher files

Program Improvement Process: The Business Education Advisory Committee will meet to review the evaluation report. The committee will be asked to prioritize the top three areas for program improvement efforts and to make specific

recommendations on actions which should be taken to improve those areas. The teacher will prepare an improvement plan based on these recommendations. This improvement plan will contain measurable objectives, action plans, and the relationship of each objective to the Mytown District Comprehensive School Improvement Plan. This improvement plan will be submitted to the principal for approval and prepared as a written report and presentation for the Board of Education's evaluation of district programs. This improvement plan will be the basis for the program evaluation improvement plan developed the following year.

SAMPLE

ANNUAL EVALUATION PLAN FOR VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS Mytown Area Vocational Technical Institute

Each vocational program area will annually conduct an evaluation to gather performance information and to determine its success in achieving the objectives of the program improvement plan. A written report will be submitted to the Director prior to July 1. This report will include the findings of the evaluation, recommendations for improvement, and a plan to achieve those improvements.

The Director will prepare a summary of the evaluation reports and an overall school improvement plan based on the program area information. This plan will be integrated with the district's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan when appropriate.

Each vocational program area evaluation will use the following data sources:

- enrollment information
- completer and placement data
- home high school graduation data
- appropriate MAP scores
- other data sources specifically related to the annual improvement plan objectives

Where possible, advisory committees will be utilized as part of the evaluation and program improvement process.

May 1	Program leaders assemble data, begin report writing
July 1	Program Evaluation Reports to Director
Aug 1	Summary report to Superintendent, Board of Education
Sep 1	Program improvement plans approved by director, shared with CSIP committee.

PLANNING AND CONDUCTING A STUDENT FOLLOW-UP STUDY

The focus on most program improvement efforts should be on the product, or the outcomes of the Business Education program. This emphasis demands that we look at the former students of the program to help us determine its effects. One excellent way of securing information about former students is to conduct a follow-up study.

What is a follow-up Study?

A follow-up study is a procedure for collecting pertinent data from or about individuals after they have had similar or comparable experiences. It is important to remember that “follow-up” implies the collection of data about something which has already taken place. In other words, students are asked to look back and consider how the Business Education program either prepared them or failed to prepare them for their future work or educational endeavors.

It should be noted that follow-up studies do not provide all the answers needed for evaluating programs. They are, however, one important component of a larger design for evaluating the total educational endeavor.

Why Conduct a Follow-up Study?

Generally, a follow-up study is used to obtain information about the extent to which the objectives of the Business Education program are being met. Follow-up studies serve a very useful purpose in eliciting reactions from former students about how well the program prepared them for career-sustaining employment and further education.

Some of the major reasons for conducting follow-up studies are as follows:

- To determine the number and types of employment which former students entered locally and regionally on a part-time or full-time basis.
- To learn the extent to which former students have made use of their vocational education.
- To discover the extent of the mobility among former students.
- To determine how the Business Education program or teacher could be of further assistance to the former students relative to counseling, placement, and/or education.
- To discover the extent to which former students are taking advantage of available postsecondary and adult educational opportunities.

It should be remembered that information obtained from follow-up studies has some limitations because the respondents generally have a limited knowledge of alternatives, and each respondent reacts from a different frame of reference. One important factor to keep in mind is that respondents will be reacting to the program as they knew it. If changes have been made since the former students left the program, they may be unaware of them. Hence, the interpretation of data and comments from students must take these changes into account.

Determining the Follow-Up Procedure

The mail questionnaire is the most frequently used approach. The problem of non-respondents, however, is a major shortcoming of this questionnaire procedure. Several research studies have revealed that students in the lower percentile of their class tend to return a lower percentage of questionnaires than students in the top percentile of their class.

If the evaluation effort is to be successful and valid, feedback must be secured from all who participated in the program and not just the successful graduates. Therefore, it is very important that all former students be made to feel that they are valuable members of the group.

One approach to conducting follow-up studies which has proven successful is the interview, conducted either in person or by phone. Personal interviews are probably the most desirable kind of follow-up. They can, however, be expensive and require a great amount of the teacher's time.

The telephone interview can be used effectively. You are more limited in the amount of information which can be obtained, but the telephone interview may be the only workable procedure for some segments of the population. Often, a combination of mail questionnaires and personal interviews with a sample of non-respondents is used.

Determining the Group to Follow-Up

Former students being surveyed should have been out of school a sufficient length of time to be able to reflect on the relevance and helpfulness of their previous educational experience. The student who graduates in the spring of the school year should be surveyed during the early part of the following fall semester. This provides the graduate time to become established in either employment or further education.

It must be remembered, however, that the longer former students have been out of school, the greater problem they will have in separating the value of their formal education experience from the influence of other educational activities. Also, the longer they are away from school, the less valid their judgments about the current Business Education program are likely to be.

Procedures for Conducting the Follow-Up

A technique which is gaining popularity is to send a card or letter to the former student prior to mailing a follow-up questionnaire. The purpose of this card or letter is to alert the former students that they will soon be receiving an important questionnaire which they are urged to complete and return as soon as possible.

The following mailing pattern is suggested at two-week intervals:

- First mailing—"alert" card (see Sample 1)
- Second mailing—follow-up questionnaire, cover letter, and return envelope—stamped and addressed (see Sample 2)
- Third mailing—second request follow-up questionnaire, second cover letter, and return envelope—stamped and addressed (see Sample 3)

The cover letter should be printed on school letterhead and should be signed by the teacher. It is harder to resist a letter that has been personally addressed and signed than it is to resist a greeting from a computer.

A stamped, self-addressed envelope should always accompany the follow-up instrument and cover letter.

Timing is important in conducting a follow-up study. There is a slight preference for the early part of the week; mailings should arrive on Monday or Tuesday. Avoid periods of "stress" such as middle of April, vacation times, holidays, etc.

When using a multiple mailing approach, it makes sense to use a different strategy on the first and second mailings. Some people are early-in-the-week performers, others late-in-the-week performers. If you tried to reach them early in the week on the first mailing, try for an end of the week arrival on the subsequent mailing so the letter arrives on Friday or Saturday. Remind respondents of the date by which the questionnaire should be returned. It is recommended that the respondents be given a two-week period in which to return the follow-up questionnaire.

Cover letters should be printed on letterhead and envelopes should have a return address with which the former students can easily identify. The physical appearance of the materials sent to former students should be of professional quality and should be designed to arouse interest.

Locating Former Students

One of the most difficult problems often faced in conducting a follow-up study is locating the former students. One of the best methods of maximizing returns is the advance orientation of students who will be asked to respond to questionnaires at a later date. Before students leave your program, tell them that they will be receiving a follow-up questionnaire through the mail during the fall of the year. If at all possible, review the questionnaire and its purpose with them so they can raise any questions they may have.

A number of methods can be used to secure the addresses of former students. Some of these methods include—

- Writing “Please Forward” on announcements and questionnaires.
- Sending self-addressed change of address cards to parents of non-respondents so the parents can provide the current address.
- Checking the city directory at the public library.
- Checking area telephone directories.
- Asking for help from other students who are still in school.

Sample 1: Alert Letter

(School Letterhead)

Date

Name
Address
City, State Zip

Dear _____:

In the near future, you will receive a questionnaire concerning your experiences since leaving our school. I would appreciate your cooperation in completing and returning the questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to aid in improving our Business Education program for the future. Your responses to the questions will be of tremendous aid to us and to the students now enrolled in the program. Your answers will be kept in strictest confidence.

I look forward to getting your response!

Sincerely,

Business Teacher

Sample 2: Cover Letter

(School Letterhead)

Date

Name
Address
City, State Zip

Dear _____:

Each year the faculty and administration of _____ (High School or AVTS) asks our graduates to evaluate the Business Education program.

As a graduate of the Business Education program, I am asking you to participate in a follow-up study. We are trying to determine the current status of our graduates and to solicit your input as to how we can make the Business Education program better.

You can make a tremendous contribution to the future improvement of the program by completing and returning the enclosed survey. The information which you will supply will be treated in strict confidentiality.

Please take a few minutes to complete this form and return it to me in the stamped, self-addressed envelope that is also enclosed. Please have your response back by _____.

Thank you for your help and if I can be of any assistance to you, please feel free to call upon me.

Sincerely,

Business Teacher

Enclosures: Follow-Up Survey
Mailing Envelope

Sample 3: Second Request Cover Letter

(School Letterhead)

Date

Name
Address
City, State Zip

Dear _____:

The response to our request for information from former students of the Business Education program has been most gratifying. The returned questionnaires are being analyzed and I hope to have the report completed in a few weeks.

Perhaps the first questionnaire we sent to you has been mislaid, so I have enclosed another for your convenience. I hope to have all of our former students respond so that the information will be as complete as possible.

Please use the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelope to return the completed questionnaire today. Thank you for your cooperation!

Sincerely,

Business Teacher

Enclosures: Follow-Up Survey
Mailing Envelope

**ANYTOWN HIGH SCHOOL/VOCATIONAL SCHOOL
BUSINESS EDUCATION
FOLLOW-UP SURVEY OF VOCATIONAL GRADUATES**

Name _____
(Last) (First) (Middle) (Maiden)

Permanent Address (or address at which someone would know how to contact you)

(Street) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

1. Type of vocational education instruction you received at your high school, vocational school/career center or community college: (i.e., Business Technology) _____

2. Present employment status (check one):

- ____ a. Employed full-time in field (or related field) of study
____ b. Employed part-time in field (or related field) of study
____ c. Other unrelated full-time employment
 (1) List field of employment _____
____ d. Unemployed
 ____ (1) Seeking employment _____ (2) Not Seeking employment
____ e. Unavailable
 ____ (1) Attending school _____ (3) Homemaker
 ____ (2) Military Service _____ (4) Other _____

3. If you checked 2c (other unrelated employment), which of the following reasons best answers why you took a job outside the field of study?

- ____ a. Could not find job in area of study
____ b. Location of available job in area of study not convenient
____ c. Lacked the skill levels required for available jobs in area of study
____ d. Type of work undesirable
____ e. Better salary in job outside of field
____ f. Other (explain) _____

4. Did you receive job placement assistance from your high school, vocational school/career center or community college? _____

5. Present job title _____

6. How long have you been employed at this job? _____

7. What duties do you find most difficult? _____

8. What software packages do you use most frequently (i.e., Word, WordPerfect, Excel, etc.)?

Follow-Up Survey 2

9. What units of study in your vocational education study were most helpful? _____

10. What units of study in your vocational education study were least helpful? _____

11. Did your vocational courses/program prepare you in the following areas to meet your employer's requirements?

Place a checkmark (✓) by the correct response:

Y = Yes N = No N/A = Not applicable to job

	YES	NO	N/A		YES	NO	N/A
Cable Wiring/Installing				Keyboarding*			
Calculators				Loading Software			
Chart and Graph Preparation				Machine Transcription*			
Composition (letters, etc..)				Network Management			
Computations/Verifications				Presentational Software			
Computer Programming				Problem-Solving			
Configuration Routers				Processing Mail			
Copy/Fax Machine				Proofreading			
Database Software				Records/Reports Compilation			
Decision-Making				Spreadsheet Software			
Desktop Publishing				Stress Management			
Editing/Revising				Tasks Prioritization			
Electronic File Management				Telephone			
Electronic Forms				Text/Graphics Scanning			
Electronic Mail				Time Management			
Filing (Manual)				Website Development			
Grammar and Punctuation				Word Processing			
Human Relations				Work Habits			
Internet							

*What was employer's requirement? _____

12. What suggestions or recommendations would you make to improve the effectiveness of vocational education at your local high school, vocational school/career center, or community college?

Other Comments: